



# CONNECTICUT AFL-CIO

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## Testimony of the Connecticut AFL-CIO before the Labor and Public Employees Committee

February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2015

Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee,

I am Lori Pelletier and I serve as the Executive Secretary- Treasurer of the Connecticut AFL-CIO. I am here to testify on behalf of the 900 affiliated local unions who represent 200,000 working men and women from every city and town in our great state as follows:

The Prevailing Wage law was enacted as a way to protect states from the importation of unskilled cheap labor. Here in Connecticut, we have some wonderful apprenticeship programs and high standards for licensed workers. Weakening this law will undoubtedly further open the floodgates for out-of-state companies to under-bid projects, bus in their own out-of-state workers, and pay them a low wage with no health insurance. Many of the workers will be unlicensed or undocumented. And once the project is complete, they will head back to their state to spend that money at home. We won't see the sales tax revenue from those workers.

If the proponents of these pieces of legislation believe government is better off by eliminating these protections then why not allow out anyone who agrees to the least wage to run for our General Assembly regardless of ability? We'd certainly save a little bit of money, but would it be in our best interest? No because if people from out of state come in and have no loyalty to our state what kind of laws would they pass? Not anything good for those of us left behind. Prevailing rate provides us with the same protection as does our statutes requiring legislators be registered electors in our state.

Prevailing Wage in no way mandates or shows preferential treatment to a union worker over a non-union worker. It simply states the fair wages that should be paid as determined by the Department of Labor. Prevailing Wage protects in-state workers, union and non-union.

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Simply stated, the prevailing wage is the minimum wage that has been established for high skilled construction workers per trade classification. Many of the proposed bills on this agenda seek to increase the threshold at which the prevailing wage would apply. This would result in decreased wages and benefits for construction workers that are getting back on their feet after an unprecedented downturn in employment of construction work.

Therefore we oppose Proposed S.B. 113,114,180,181,182. We are also in opposition to the following Proposed H.B.5071,5072,5073,5074,5075,5076,5078,5079,5208,5209,5440,5441,5510,5511,5515, 5516,5613,6250,6251,6650,6666

Respectfully Submitted,

Lori Pelletier

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